

Cultural Resources and Climate Change

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Overview of the DHRs Preparedness as it relates to Climate Change (including sea level rise) effects on Cultural Resources

State agencies have been asked to address these questions:

1. What is your agency doing so far about the issue of increased future flood hazard risk from sea level rise and storm surge and the potential losses in assets that may result?
2. What existing statutes, regulations or policies that pertain in your area(s) of function:
 1. Will be directly affected by increased coastal flood risk itself?
 2. May act as barriers or impediments that need to be removed before your agency can respond as needed?
 3. Represent gaps that need to be filled before your agency can respond as needed?
3. At this stage, what actions or changes in state law, if any, can you identify that will be needed?
4. What have been your interactions (including guidance provided to, and guidance received from), other levels of government (Federal, regional, local) over this issue?

Background

Cultural resources, which include archaeological sites, cultural landscapes, ethnographic resources, historic structures and museum collections, have distinct considerations with respect to climate change. Most are fixed in place or derive much of their significance from the place within which they were created. All are unique. As a result, the capacity of cultural resources to adapt to changing environments is limited.

Impacts to cultural resources from climate change range from coastal erosion and storm damage to effects of wildfires, floods and more rapid deterioration due to changing rain and temperature patterns. Although cultural resources have always been subject to these types of environmental forces, today, observed and projected climate change trends are a great concern as these forces accelerate, intensify, and combine in new ways that are increasing our rate of loss.

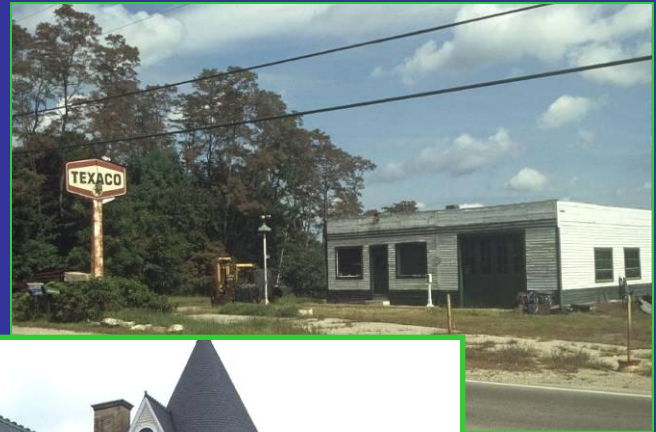
Cultural resources are irreplaceable indicators of the wide array of lifeways, ideas, beliefs, practices, and experiences that, over time, have led to the world we live in today

What Is a Historical Resource?



A district, site, landscape, building, structure or object that is significant in the history, architecture, engineering, archaeology or culture of this state, its communities, or the nation.

New Hampshire has a variety of resources



DHR does not have a comprehensive inventory of all that exists in the state.



Archaeology



1. What is your agency doing so far about the issue of increased future flood hazard risk from sea level rise and storm surge and the potential losses in assets that may result?

- Until just recently the Division has only been able to:

REACT AND RESPOND TO NATURAL DISASTERS

- The Division has recently received a NPS (National Park Service) grant for Hurricane Sandy Disaster Relief.
 - Objectives: to provide technical assistance and emergency repairs to historic and archaeological resources impacted by Hurricane Sandy.
 - Funds may also be used for hiring additional temporary staff to enable expedited reviews
 - Development of data base for properties and provide technical assistance to local governments on preparedness or procedures for survey.

2. What existing statutes, regulations or policies that pertain in your area(s) of function?

State and Federal Regulations that guide the DHR

Federal Regulation

- **National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) - Section 106**
 - This Act became law on October 15, 1966 (Public Law 89-665; 16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.). Subsequent amendments to the Act include Public Law 91-243, Public Law 93-54, Public Law 94-422, Public Law 94-458, Public Law 96-199, Public Law 96-244, Public Law 96-515, Public Law 98-483, Public Law 99-514, Public Law 100-127, Public Law 102-575, Public Law 103-437, Public Law 104-333, Public Law 106-113, Public Law 106-176, Public Law 106-208, Public Law 106-355, and Public Law 109-453.
- **Purpose-Consultation**
 - Section 106 of the NHPA requires Federal agencies to take into account the effects of their undertakings on historic properties and afford a reasonable opportunity to comment on such undertakings.
- **Goal-avoid, minimize, mitigate**
 - The goal of consultation is to identify historic properties potentially affected by the undertaking, assess its effects and seek ways to avoid, minimize or mitigate any adverse effects on historic properties.

Section 106

Responsibility of the Federal Agency and DHR Consultation

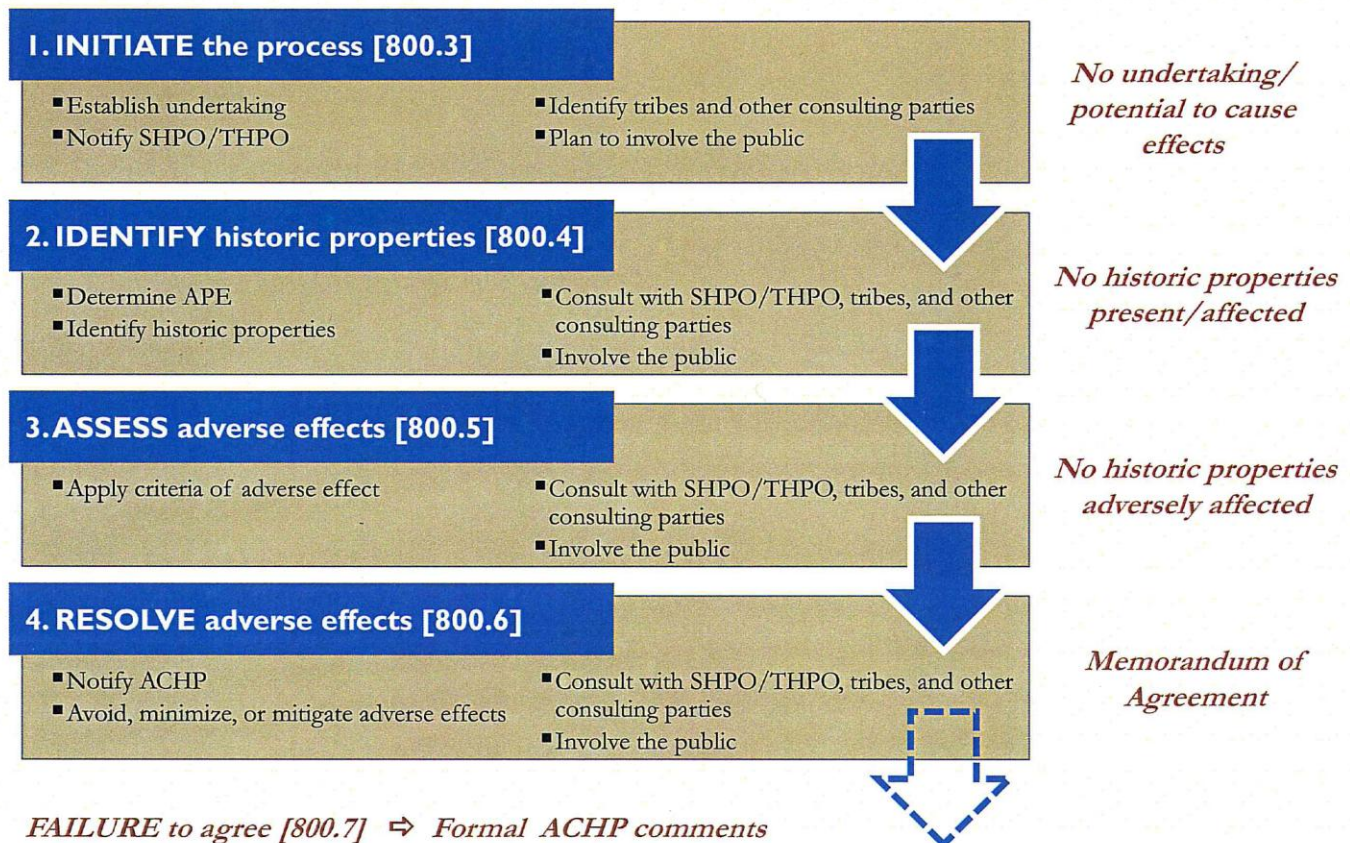
Any federally funded, licensed or permitted undertaking requires that the Federal Agency take into consideration the affects on historic resources under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966.

The Process

- Initiation-defining the undertaking by agency or applicant
- Identification-identify listed NR properties or determine if surveys are necessary for archaeology and/or historic structures.
 - Section 106 gives equal consideration to eligible or listed NR Properties
- Determine how properties may be affected by the undertaking
- Explore measures to avoid or minimize harm (adverse effect) to historic properties
- Reach agreement between agency, DHR and other consulting parties on minimization or mitigation

THE SECTION 106 PROCESS

CONSULTATION



State Regulations

RSA 227-C

[Chapter 32, Laws of 1974 (RSA 227-C:1, 1974-1981)
Chapter 363, Laws of 1998 (RSA 227-C:1-a, 1998)]

The legislature of New Hampshire has determined that the historical, archeological, architectural, engineering, and cultural heritage of New Hampshire is among the most important environmental assets of the state and that the rapid social and economic development of contemporary society threatens the remaining vestiges of this heritage; therefore, it is hereby declared to be public policy and in the public interest of this state to engage in a comprehensive program of historic preservation to promote the use and conservation of such property for the education, inspiration, pleasure, and enrichment of the citizens of New Hampshire.

RSA 227-C:9

Directs all state agencies and departments to cooperate in the identification and preservation of NH's historic resources.

What resources will be directly affected by increased coastal flood risk itself?

- Historic structures
 - Including but not limited to: buildings, bridges, dams, culverts
- Archaeological sites
 - Both historic and Native American archaeological sites.
- Cultural landscapes

What gaps need to be filled before our agency can respond as needed?

- Funding is the Division's biggest concern. Without adequate funding we cannot provide:
 - appropriate training opportunities for communities to conduct town wide surveys
 - training for consultants to respond to natural disasters
 - access to data bases through digitization
- No oversight of resources.
 - communities may be unaware of the role that the Division may play in resource protection or identification-sharing of information is necessary
- Coordination or interfacing with other agencies and municipalities has been lacking in the past.
 - this commission should enable the Division to interface with other agencies and municipalities

How has the Division interacted with other agencies?

- The Division works with all other agencies that are involved with federal undertakings - either through federal funding, permitting or licensing.
- The Division has been included in the review and comment of the Hazard/Risk Evaluation State Plan through the Office of Emergency Management.
- The Division works closely with FEMA during declared emergencies.
- The Division works closely with DRED (historic properties) and DPW
- The Division works closely with DES on Oil Spill disaster response and is part of the response team.

The Division has requested assistance from HSEM. That assistance includes:

- Assist Division in efforts to inventory, catalogue and assess the archaeological and historical properties (including buildings, dams, bridges, etc.)
- Conduct analysis of impacts prior to natural and human caused disasters on historical properties as well as the potential for future impacts to these resources.
- Develop a strategy for mapping existing sensitive cultural resources as may be impacted by various hazard types in GIS format useful in Hazard Mitigation projects.
- Assist Division in recruitment and training emergency field survey teams to expedite historical site review in an emergency
- Assist Division in efforts to improve the fire protection of those historical resources at risk.

Most important to remember:
Historical Resources are non-renewable and endangered resources.
When they are lost, no matter how they are lost, they are lost
forever!



Information

www.nh.gov/nhdhr

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